

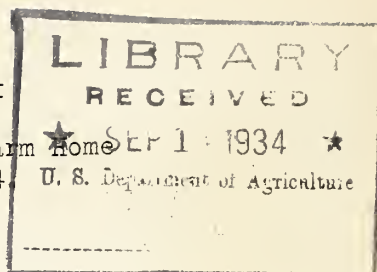
Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1-9
57992 Rec

The Poultry and Egg Outlook in August 1934

Radio broadcast by Roy C. Potts on the National Farm Home
Hour Program of Wednesday, August 22, 1934.



--oo00oo--

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture released its Midsummer Poultry and Egg Outlook statement on August 16. A copy of that statement will be mailed to those who request it. During this five minute broadcast I shall present the highlights in that report which are of particular interest to poultry and egg producers.

The number of hens and pullets of laying age in farm flocks on August 1 this year was 3 percent less than on August 1 last year and on August 1, 1932. It was 10 percent less than the August 1 average for the five years 1927 to 1931, and the smallest since the record was begun in 1925. The number of hens and pullets by January 1, 1935 will be close to 10 percent below the number of January 1, 1934.

The number of chickens of this year's hatching in farm flocks on July 1 was 10 percent less than last year, 8 percent less than in 1932, and 9 percent less than the five-year average. Commercial hatchings of baby chicks during the first six months of 1934 were about 10 percent smaller than last year. Hatchings were very much smaller than last year in the Central States ranging from 8.7 percent less in the West North-Central States to 19.3 percent less in the East North-Central States. Hatchings on the Pacific Coast were 11.2 percent smaller than last year, but in the Mountain States there was an increase of 6.6 percent. Hatchings in the New England States showed an increase of 30.2 percent while the Middle Atlantic States showed a decrease of 15.6 percent and the South Atlantic States a decrease of 10.9 percent.

The total production of eggs this year will be materially less than last year due to the decrease in number of layers in farm flocks and a smaller production of eggs per hen. The production of eggs during the early fall is expected to be at least 5 to 10 percent less than it was last year and production in the late fall and winter will undoubtedly show an even greater decrease.

A factor to be considered this year in the production of eggs and poultry is the short supply of feed and the high price of feed. August 1 crop conditions indicated a shortage in production compared with last year of 31 percent in corn, 25 percent in oats, and 7 percent in wheat. Compared with the five-year average, corn is 36 percent less, oats 54 percent less, and wheat 45 percent less.

Another factor to be considered this year in the production of eggs and poultry is the decrease in storage stocks of shell eggs and of frozen poultry as compared with last year. Stocks of shell eggs in cold storage on August 1 were nearly 9,000,000 cases compared with 9,500,000 cases last year and 9,120,000 cases for the five-year average. Combined

(over)

stocks of shell and frozen eggs in storage on August 1 this year amounted to the equivalent of 12,421,000 cases compared with 12,583,000 cases on August 1 last year, and a five-year average of 12,144,000 cases. Stocks of frozen poultry in storage on August 1 were 44,824,000 pounds compared with 44,970,000 pounds last year and 39,458,000 pounds for the five-year average.

The farm price of eggs during April, May, and June of this year was about 24 percent above the price last year, and the farm price of poultry about 12 percent above. The seasonal advance in egg prices throughout the remainder of 1934 will probably be greater than normal. Production will be smaller, and the depressing effect of storage stocks will not be greater than last year. Small stocks of poultry on farms, together with reduced supplies of many other farm products will tend to cause poultry prices to be maintained throughout the fall of 1934 at levels above those of last year.

In the extreme drought areas where feed supplies are short, poultrymen are faced with rather unfavorable conditions. In sections favored with a supply of feed there appear to be good opportunities for the producer. The reduced production of eggs throughout the fall and winter, and the relatively small production expected next spring, should result in a level of prices throughout the fall and winter sufficiently high to offset, in part, the high costs of feed. Improved prices for eggs now prevailing and in prospect during the fall, should encourage producers to maintain their laying flocks.

To summarize the situation, it may be said that the outlook confronting the poultry and egg producers today is more encouraging than it has been for the past year or two. Production of poultry and eggs this year has been considerably below last year, and the supply of eggs during the coming fall and particularly during the winter will be considerably below last year owing to fewer layers in farm flocks and to a scarcity and high price of feed. The farm price of eggs and poultry during recent months has been higher than it was a year ago, and prices this fall are likewise expected to be higher.

###